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Soviets regularly foil U.S. security efforts

By Bill Gertz
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The recent sex-for-secrets spy scandal at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow is only one of several major security breaches the United States has suffered in the Soviet Union, intelligence officials said yesterday.

Since the 1950s, the internal security section of the KGB intelligence service has bugged embassies, opened sealed diplomatic pouches, bombarded diplomats with micro-waves and used lethal dust to track foreigners, the officials said.

As new revelations surface in the damaging scandal, administration officials are grappling with what to do with the new U.S. Embassy in Moscow. The building, which has been under construction since 1980, is widely believed to be filled with KGB-planted listening devices that have rendered the structure virtually useless.

Ilya Dzirkvilov, a Soviet defector who worked in the internal security branch of the KGB, told Western security officials that for decades KGB agents routinely made covert entries into foreign embassies to

gather intelligence information.

To keep track of foreigners in Moscow, the KGB devotes enormous resources, the officials said. One common ploy is using KGB-trained female "swallows" and male "ravens" who attempt to seduce foreigners and then blackmail them into spying.

"They [the KGB] have thousands of people and that's all they do, day and night, is follow people around Moscow," said one U.S. official.

At the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, both Marine Sgt. Clayton Lonetree and Cpl. Arnold Bracy were lured into romantic relations with Soviet women in what officials now call a "classic honey trap" KGB operation. The two Marines are suspected of aiding KGB efforts to plant hundreds of high-tech electronic listening devices in secure areas of the embassy.

Other past security failures include:

- In 1951, a hidden KGB listening device was discovered inside a United States seal fastened to the U.S. ambassador's desk.

- State Department officials revealed in 1964 that more than 40 lis-

tening devices were discovered inside embassy walls before the building was turned over to the United States in 1953.

- In 1975, harmful levels of microwave transmissions were beamed into the U.S. Embassy by the KGB, forcing the embassy to install special screens to protect workers.

- A 1977 fire in the upper floors of the embassy allowed KGB agents — accompanying several hundred Moscow firefighters — to gain access to the communications equipment sources said. The next day, a diplomatic pouch containing new communications gear sent to Moscow from West Germany was intercepted by the KGB and was believed compromised, the sources said.

- In 1978, U.S. officials discovered attempts by the KGB to bug typewriters, but thwarted the effort.

- The Senate Intelligence Committee revealed U.S. typewriters were bugged sometime in the early 1980s. Sources said the KGB intercepted the machines before they were delivered and implanted special electronic devices.

- Also in 1978, intelligence sources said a radio transmitter was found inside an embassy chimney along with wires leading to a tunnel that connected the embassy with a Soviet apartment used by the KGB. The tunnel was later blocked.

- In August 1985, the State Department revealed that the KGB used a carcinogenic tracking powder to trace the movements of U.S. diplomats.